perplexity

https://dailygalaxy.com/2025/07/2000-years-before-our-time-the-greeks-created-the-worlds-first-computer-so-advanced-that-it-continues-to-baffle-scientists/

The article discusses the **Antikythera mechanism**, an ancient Greek device discovered in 1900 by sponge divers off the coast of the island of Antikythera. This artifact, found in a shipwreck dating to around 65 BCE, is widely regarded as the **world's first analog computer**[1][2].

Key facts about the Antikythera mechanism:

- **Purpose and Function:** It is a highly sophisticated astronomical instrument, about the size of a shoebox, containing over **30 interlocking gears**. The mechanism was engineered to **track celestial bodies**—including the sun, moon, and the five planets known at the time (Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn)—with remarkable precision. Its dials could display the phases of the moon, predict eclipses, and model complex cycles such as the **Metonic cycle** (a 19-year lunar calendar) and the **Saros cycle** (used for eclipse prediction)[1][2].

- **Engineering Features:** The device's most impressive feature is its **pin-and-slot mechanism**, which allowed it to account for the moon's varying orbital speed. It used **epicyclic gearing**, a technique where smaller gears rotate around larger ones on eccentric axles—technology not seen again until the Middle Ages[1][2].

- **Historical Significance:** The Antikythera mechanism's origins are believed to date between the third and first centuries BCE. Its technological sophistication far surpassed anything else known from the ancient world, and no comparable device is known to have existed until more than a millennium later[1][2].

- **Modern Research:** In the 1970s, physicist Derek de Solla Price and his team confirmed it was an **astronomical calculator**. Advances such as X-ray tomography have since revealed over 2,000 inscribed characters, most of which have now been deciphered. In 2024, researchers used advanced statistical modeling to confirm that

the device tracked a **lunar calendar**, overturning earlier assumptions that it followed an Egyptian solar calendar[1][2].

- **Ongoing Mystery:** Despite over a century of study, the Antikythera mechanism continues to **baffle scientists**. Its exact origins, the identity of its maker, and the full extent of its functions remain subjects of debate. The device stands as a testament to the **technological ingenuity** of the ancient Greeks and continues to challenge modern understanding of ancient engineering[1][2].

In summary, the Antikythera mechanism is a **mechanical marvel** from ancient Greece, demonstrating a level of technological sophistication that would not be matched for centuries. Its discovery has profoundly changed our view of what ancient engineers were capable of achieving[1][2].

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1. https://dailygalaxy.com/2025/07/2000-years-before-our-time-the-greeks-created-the-worlds-first-computer-so-advanced-that-it-continues-to-baffle-scientists/

2. https://exploratornews.wordpress.com